ANNEX

Intervention by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan before the North Atlantic Cooperation Council meeting at Brussels on 3 December 1993

Let me first of all express my gratitude to the hosts of the meeting for their hospitality and the excellent conditions of work.

Representing at this high forum the country enveloped in the flames of one of the most impressive and tragic conflicts of contemporary times, I want to draw the attention of my distinguished colleagues to a real threat for peace and stability on the European continent that has been concealed by not taking efficient measures against the aggression.

Aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the sovereign Azerbaijan, which has continued for six years already, has resulted in the occupation of one fifth of the territory of my State. The peaceful Azerbaijani population is systematically exterminated and ousted. More than 1 million citizens of Azerbaijan have become the victims of the "ethnic cleansing" policy and are now refugees in their own land. The tragedy of the situation is aggravated by cold weather that puts in jeopardy the lives of hundreds of thousands of people without shelter. Hundreds of populated areas have been looted and burnt down, the material values created by many generations of Azerbaijani people are being destroyed. Not much longer than a week ago the Armenian troops occupied the Azerbaijani populated area of Khudaferin, situated on the frontier with the Islamic Republic of Iran. More than 70 per cent of the frontier of Azerbaijan with Armenia, as well as 161 kilometres of the frontier with the Islamic Republic of Iran, are under the control of the Armenian occupation forces. There is a direct evidence of the aspiration of Armenia, consequently conducting the policy of annexation, to internationalize the conflict and to involve in it other countries of the region.

After realization of its programme-minimum, that is, after the occupation of the whole territory of the Nagorny Karabakh region, the aggressor has started to set up along its perimeter a so-called "sanitary zone", including the regions of Azerbaijan situated around the occupied Nagorny Karabakh. Having forcibly ousted the local population from these regions and having completely or partially destroyed the communication lines, with the exception of those linking the region with Armenia, the armed forces of Armenia realized a thoroughly thought-out strategic plan of Yerevan, which envisaged the simultaneous transformation of the Nagorny Karabakh into an isolated military space surrounded by lifeless territory space and the exclusion of the possibility of the return of the Azerbaijani refugees to their homes.

At the same time, plans of nationalist Armenia are not limited by Karabakh's anschluss or "reunification", which is how Armenia touchingly calls the armed annexation of the part of the sovereign State (by the way, this word is the only analogue of a special term produced by the ideologists of the Third Reich).

Since the very beginning of the conflict, the bordering regions of Azerbaijan, including Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, have been subjected to incessant shooting on the part of Armenia. By the way, one of the villages of Nakhchivan-Kyarky is still controlled by the occupants. There have been numerous attacks on the populated areas of Tovuz, Kedabek and Kazakh regions.

Unfortunately, recent experience demonstrates that indecision, a half-way policy and completely intolerable balancing between the interests of the aggressor and its victim is not only a connivance with respect to the aggressor, but it also undermines the confidence of the countries that have recently become members of the international community.

The efforts on the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict undertaken by the international community, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process, have not, unfortunately, resulted in tangible results, owing to the militarily annexationist position of the Republic of Armenia. In our view, the most important reason for the unsuccessful character of the peace activities aimed at restoring the stability in the region is the refusal to recognize directly the fact of aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the sovereign Azerbaijan. Numerous fact-finding missions of such authoritative organizations as the United Nations and the CSCE have based their conclusions on the difficulties arising from the recognition of direct involvement of the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia in the conflict. At the same time, we have all the necessary proof of that and we, on many occasions, provided them to the competent structures of international organizations. How else can the facts of the seizure of eight villages of the Kazakh region of Azerbaijan, having no border with the occupied Nagorny Karabakh region and bordering on Armenia, be explained. Back in December of 1992, Armenian troops occupied eight villages of the Zangelan region of Azerbaijan.

Practically all the regions of Azerbaijan bordering on Armenia and occupied during the aggression were seized as a result of attacks from two directions: from the occupied region of Nagorny Karabakh and directly from the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

Moreover, my country is deeply concerned with a tendency in the CSCE Minsk Group to acknowledge Azerbaijan as a "defeated party" that has to accept the conditions contradicting the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, CSCE and Security Council resolutions. Every new package of proposals of the Minsk Group on withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories contains more and more concessions to the aggressor and poses new preliminary conditions for the evacuation of the occupied regions of Azerbaijan. There are attempts of changing the status of Armenians of the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, with simultaneous removal of the other interested party, the Azerbaijani community of the mountainous part of Karabakh, from the process of peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Such an approach for the settlement, having as its essence the recognition of the force factor, creates a dangerous precedent of territorial gains by utilizing the practice of fait accompli, and means the refusal to implement our

common task - creation of a new world order, based upon the principles of respect for legitimacy, human rights and democracy.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is one of the most important elements of the security structure. However, I should like to emphasize the direct threat for its implementation on the territory of Azerbaijan, owing to the aggression of the Republic of Armenia. How can one talk about the regional system of security or arms control in accordance with the CFE when Azerbaijan - a CSCE and North Atlantic Cooperation Council member State - has on its territory a big military alignment, uncontrolled by the Government, armed with an abundant amount of heavy weapons and constantly widening the zone of its occupation. Utilizing the occupied Lachin, Kelbajar and Zangelan regions of Azerbaijan, Armenia transfers to Nagorny Karabakh its regular troops, heavy weapons and ammunitions. Official Yerevan has on numerous occasions claimed that it is "the humanitarian assistance" that is transferred to the Upper Karabakh from Armenia through the occupied regions. The predatory actions of the expeditionary corps of the Republic of Armenia clearly demonstrate the real character of this "assistance".

All of the occupied territory of Azerbaijan has found itself out of the zone of control by international inspections in accordance with the CFE Treaty and the Vienna Document. In early 1993, the Azerbaijani side succeeded with difficulty in including into the terms of reference of the advance Monitoring Group of CSCE of the provision on carrying out identification and withdrawal from the territory of our State of all foreign military personnel in cooperation with CSCE or any other competent international organization. However, this intention of goodwill has not found a timely realization. It is not by chance that Armenia tried to block the inclusion of that provision in the mandate. In this connection, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by "self-defense forces of Nagorno Karabakh". According to estimations of the London International Institute of Strategic Research, that could hardly be considered completely accurate in reflecting real figures on the quantity of foreign military personnel; on the territory of Nagorny Karabakh there are 8,000 foreigners, that is, soldiers of the army of the Republic of Armenia. We have many times presented factual evidence on this point.

There is a question of how effective are the inspections within the CFE Treaty and confidence-building measures in Europe held on the territory of Armenia. Absence of a certain amount of weapons and arms on the control sites that are used for carrying out the aggression against sovereign Azerbaijan should have drawn the attention of the inspectors in the course of their work in Armenia. One has to renounce the mechanical approach in holding inspections. During almost two years, the Azerbaijan Republic received 10 inspections, including seven in accordance with the CFE Treaty and three with the Vienna document. It is still unclear why the occupied territories of Azerbaijan have found themselves out of the zone of international inspection activities. Azerbaijan, owing to well-known circumstances, is not able, using its sovereign right, to define the quantity of arms and military personnel in the region, to say nothing about control over them. A question arises whether this situation is normal and what are these mythical "local" forces that wage military actions against the army of a State with a population of 7 million and occupy its

territories. The weaponry missing in Armenia must be looked for in Nagorny Karabakh and other regions of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia.

If the countries members of the CSCE Minsk Group, which are at the same time parties to the CFE Treaty, had taken a firm and clear position on bridling the aggressor, today we would not have the situation where, owing to the fault of Armenia, the military-political balance in Transcaucasia is considerably upset.

In connection with the situation created in the region, I deem it necessary to state that, despite all efforts of the Azerbaijani side, the aggression of the Republic of Armenia leads to gradual exclusion of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan from the zone of the CFE Treaty and confidence- and security-building measures within the framework of the Vienna Document.

Distinguished colleagues, let me point out the priority problems that have to be carefully addressed under the conditions of widening regional conflicts.

First: the consensus mechanism in the international organizations and, in particular, in the CSCE, provides the aggressor with a 100 per cent possibility of avoiding the responsibility for its deeds.

Second: it is necessary to reinforce the mechanisms of realization of the adopted decisions, to ensure firm guarantees of implementation of foreseen measures and to impose strict sanctions for the violation of agreements.

Third: it is necessary to broaden the set of instruments for peace activities of international organizations. In particular, CSCE, in our view, needs to revise its mandate and to transform its activities from passive cease-fire observation to active peace-making operations.

Fourth: it is necessary to realize clearly that, in conditions of regional conflicts, the implementation of all existing and any other agreements in the sphere of military-political security is put in serious jeopardy.

Political settlement of conflicts must be based on the determination of the world community to use military force effectively in order to stop the aggression. The aggressor should not have any doubts on that point. Otherwise, we risk to be confronted with the situation when the efforts, aimed at reaching the stability in the centre of Europe, will be reduced to zero by the chaos on its outskirts and further spillover of conflicts throughout the continent.

The concept of common European security may be viable only if based on the indivisibility of the security of all.

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